

THE
BATH COMEDIANS.

A

1162.ii.11

P O E M:

IN

TWO CANTOS.

Written in Imitation of HUDIBRAS.



L O N D O N,

Printed for the AUTHOR.

MDCCCLIII.

REMARKS

ON

THE

WITNESS IN IMITATION OF HUBBARD.



LONDON

Printed for the AUTHOR.

MDCCLIII



THE
BATH COMEDIANS.

CANTO THE FIRST.



OUR humble Servant, Mr.
Dancer,
Awake, asleep, in Dream, or
Trance, Sir;
In *England, Holland, Spain or*
France, Sir,
Perhaps you'll think all this Romance, Sir;
But on my Soul, 'tis very true,
That I've a great Respect for you;
And humbly by this Means implore ye,
For Leave to lay my Case before ye.
Criminals Hopes are all extended,
Towards the Man whom they've offended;

My Case is different, I assure ye,
 I've not offended Judge or Jury,
 Nor Prosecutor, I protest
 Sincerely and without a Jest.

It was, I think, the other Day,
 You briskly tripp'd it o'er the Way,
 And at the *Tuns* you made a Stop,
 I call'd you into our Shop,
 And ask'd you if you cou'd afford, Sir,
 To give——Yes, to give me an Order:
 But you, Sir, stopp'd my Mouth at once,
 And made me look like any Dunce;
 And then with stern contracted Brows,
 Cry'd da—n, you're all for t'other House;
 And said with a facetious Grin,
 That I thought *Y*——*ks* best Harlequin.
 'Twas some malicious evil Person,
 Some envious, good-for-nothing Whore-son,
 Who'd too much Stock of Spleen and Gall,
 No Manners nor good Sense at all;
 Whose Education has been base,
 That thus traduc'd me to your Face;
 And swore by's Hopes of future Bliss,
 I came to *Orchard-House* to his:
 I all such Slanderers defy,
 And safely can the Charge deny;
 Nay—Could I meet with that d——d Liar,
 By G—d I'd throw him on the Fire.
 Sir, tho' I'm not inclin'd to Faction,
 My Anger rises at Detraction:

But

But Character to vindicate,
 Matter of Fact I will relate;
 And can convince you in the End,
 That I am *Orchard Theatre's* Friend:
 For Instance, I commend your Playing
 In the first Place—Mind what I'm saying;
 Sir, not to flatter you for Features,
 Yet there are worse in all the Theatres:
 I like your Acting, not your Speaking,
 To me, Sir,—it is merely Squeaking;
 The Reason is you know I'm Dunce,
 So hope you'll pardon me for once:
 But now to make a quick Transition,
 I'll let you see my just Decision,
 And shew your Virtues and your Failings,
 That may prevent all future Railings;
 Nay, every Actor now in *Bath*
 I will unveil to you in Faith;
 Where they are wrong there I'll detect 'em,
 Where they are right there I'll protect 'em.

First for yourself in *crook-back'd Dick*,
 By *Jove* you almost made me sick
 To see you bounce, and strut, and vapour,
 And like a Dancing-Master caper:
 Indeed you stretch'd your Lungs, and strain'd
 That all the Audience was pain'd.
 The three first Acts were done full well,
 But the two last were d——d to H——ll:
 Had I the Beating you, I'd switch hard;
 But now 'tis Time to've done with *Richard*.
 When

When you do *Hastings* in *Jane Shore*,
 You please me well, I'll say no more ;
 This in your Praise——But do you hear
 I do not like you well in *Lear* ;
 You see I show your Loss and Gain,
 I mingle Pleasure with your Pain,
 I'd sing your Praises to the Harp ;
 Whene'er you do the *Valet sharp* ;
 Nay—ev'n the rest to you are Trash
 When you are acting Captain *Flash* ;
 Was but your Person something bigger,
 By G—d you'd cut a pretty Figure ;
 In *Bath* there would not be your Fellow,
 You'd rival *Barry* in *Othello* ;
 You noble *Hamlet* play so well,
Garrick only can in Voice excel ;
 Nay——I must own his Fame's in danger
 When e'er you play the Part of *Ranger* ;
 There's many Parts that you excel in,
 Some others you appear not well in ;
 Yet were they ballanc'd in the Scale
 Your good wou'd o'er your bad prevail.
 Now since you've boldly stood the Test,
 I will begin with all the rest,
 Such as can bear a Coadjutor
 Should take old F——/ for Tutor ;
 He is, to give the D——l his due,
 In acting and in speaking too
 A Veteran both just and true.
 There's old grave S——ns in some Parts
 Is capable to please our Hearts.

The

The next I think is G—y B—ks,
 His Actions bad, so are his Looks;
 Yet tho' indeed he's but a Drab,
 He's a good *French* Servant in *Queen Mab*;
 But yet that Man is not my Choice,
 You know I cannot hear his Voice.
 The next—well, who's the next?—O pox
 I had forgot—'tis H—y C—x,
 That Man does ev'n my Eyes beguile,
 In tragick Scenes I've seen him smile;
 But yet this simple smiling Feature
 Shews he at least has got Good-Nature,
 And I may justly set him down
 To be a most excellent Clown,
 And that he has as good Pretence
 As any other Man to Sense;
 For it is known to be a Rule
 The wisest Man best acts the Fool.
 But now with Spleen a while I'll wrestle,
 For here comes Feather, Sword, and Tossle,
 All centered in D—y C—le,
 In *Harlequin's* sweet Interludes
 He's *Woodward's* Ape in Attitudes;
 T'let further Commendations drop
 I think he is a special Fop.
 There's Taffey M—n, that old Stager,
 Shall act low Comedy for a Wager
 With any Man well struck in Years,
 That ever on the Stage appears;
Joe Haines himself, tho' dead, alas!
 Will own his Merit on his As.

Old K——y is well enough
 For *Spanish* Parts, and such like Stuff,
 C——t——bt at present's but a Duncy,
 Yet it is known he could sing once.
 For L——rt, M——n, my Intention
 Such Trash as them is not to mention;
 Is there no more—the D——l take me,
 I had forgot a Word to B——ky,
 He's a *Jasper* proper to your Puff,
 But spoils his Voice with taking Snuff;
 Yet not with Ignorance to brand him,
 I own the Man has Understanding.

But now, ye Fair, to you I come,
 Yet tremble not before your Doom
 Is past—And then or laugh or cry,
 The D——l a Bit at all care I;
 I'll censure some, and some I'll rally
 And first begin with charming S——ly,
 I——b——tt, I——b——tt, that's her Name,
 And faith she is a lovely Dame;
 They say her Voice can charm like Magick
 In Comick Scenes as well as Tragick;
 She acts well, and speaks well too,
 What more can any Woman do?
 So, Madam, that's enough for you.

Miss K——dy next comes in view,
 A beauteous Girl she is its true,
 What else? methinks I hear you cry,
 Why nothing—nothing, Zounds you lye.

Well,

Well, Sir, your Pardon, I confess
 Against your Judgment I transgress,
 And needs must own I am to blame
 Not to allow her Share of Fame;
 Therefore, ye Muses, I desire
 With some sweet Fancy you'll inspire
 My lazy Pen, and make it scatter
 Some pretty Praises towards th' Matter.
 'Tis done——And now t'assume my Station,
 After my Pen's had Preparation,
 I swear by th' Roses and the Lillies
 In her fair Checks, she's a good *Phyllis*;
 And farther I'll be bold to tell her,
 She pleases me in *Biddy Bellair*;
 And in the School-Boy my Pen itches
 To praise her when she's dress'd in Breeches;
 I writ all this to pleasure you,
 The D——l's in't if it wont do.
 The next I think that doth approach
 Is call'd Miss *Gudgeon*——no Miss *R——ch*:
 Some little Fame falls to her Lot,
 A pert *Doris*, and good *Mermott*;
 She's young as yet upon the Stage,
 In time she'll mend I dare engage.

But what bright Beauty's this I spy?
 Ah!——is it you, dear Mrs. P——ye?
 Aye there's a Shape, and there's a Face,
 But where's the Air, and where's the Grace?
 He that can find them wins my Money,
 If not, why credit honest *Dunry*,

B

And

And take his Word or good or bad,
That they are Beauties she ne'er had.

Now Mother B—— comes the next,
Egad I've chose a woeful Text,
Yet should I slight her she'd be vext,
If we may credit publick Rumour,
She has been good and still has Humour;
Nay—— scarce a Man that Breeches wears
Can shew a better Leg than hers.

There's Mr. R—— and Spouse
Ought to be nam'd, that's all, God knows;
Nay I'll write all that I can blab out,
I must mention little B—— and A——
Both handy Fellows that is certain,
The Play is done, let down the Curtain.



But what bright Beauty's this I spy?
Al!—is it you, dear Mrs. P——?
Aye there's a Shape, and there's a Face,
But where's the Air, and where's the Grace?
He that can find them wins my Money,
Now I have found honest Dandy.

And

B

OTNAC

CANTO THE SECOND.

NOW Spleen and Gall and Satire rouse,
 And follow me to t'other House.
 And make the petty Gods at S—p—t's
 Blush till they are as red as Cinnamon.
 First comes the mighty Manager
 Ycleped P—p—s, him I revere
 Because, as far as I can scan,
 He is a right good-natur'd Man;
 In comick Scenes he'll make you laugh,
 In clownish Parts or in *Falstaff's*
 But when he does a tragick Part
 By *Jove* he is not worth a F—t.
 The next to him I think is C—k,
 Ugly his Person, mean his Look,
 Yet of Admirers he's his Choice,
 Strong, clear and manly is his Voice,
 Of Judgment, sound, good Education,
 As any Player in the Nation;
 His Person his Preferment hindered,
 But why write I against my Kindred?
 This very Man, Sir, would you know it,
 Is like myself a lousy Poet.
 Now tremble, Sir, for very Fear-o,
 For here comes strutting S—p—t's
 And on—H—s Here on—

In *Romeo*, *Jaffier*, and *Varanes*,
 He does his best to entertain us;
 He hits some Parts, Sir, to a Tittle
 You'll say that some is very little;
 I grant ye——it's for want of Power,
 Had he but that he'd strut his Hour
 Upon the Stage with any he
 That e'er perform'd in Tragedy:
 For comick Parts he is not fit,
 He tragedises every Bit.
 'Tis Time with him to make an End,
 I'm not his Enemy nor his Friend.
 But who comes here?—'tis Mr. Y---s,
 Gods! what a Lanthorn-jaw'd long Bones;
 Is he a Player?——So they say,
 He'd better live some other Way;
 Perhaps, Sir, this Advice I give him
 May do him good, and so I leave him.

But here comes one whom I shall scourge,
 And what's his Name, Sir, T---m M---g---s?
 Is he an Actor?——No, a Fool,
 And ought again to go to School:
 Are there no Parts that he can play?
 Yes, Sir, an Ais; for he can bray;
 He is no Speaker, but a Prater,
 A D--d Valet to the *Petit Maitre*,
 And the only Part he should be put on
 Is Harlequino's Running Footman;
 But I have done with this young Sharper,
 And now I come to B---y H---p---r,

Who

Who, tho' bred an Apothecary,
 Is capable to make me merry;
 Tho' Mirth's no Power to prevail on
 The Sons of *Hippocrates* or *Galen*;
 They're ever in a cloudy Mood,
 They deal so much in Death and Blood:
H—p—r alone may be exempted,
 Since he's the first that has attempted
 To break thro' *Esculapian* Rules,
 Join grave Physicians with dull Fools:
 He's a good *Pierrot*, take my Word,
 And Clown in *Harlequin* Restor'd;
 And whilst he plays such Parts as these,
 I'm very sure he'll always please.
 Is not the next old Mr. *M—t—r*?
 I think so, — Nay, I'm very certain
 It is the Man now he comes nearer,
 And 'gad I seldom see a queerer,
 But he's a d——d confounded Swearer.
 Yet, Sir, I'll hold you Half a Crown
 There's not so good a *Pantaloön*
 In *Bath*, — And to speak one Word more,
 Better than all I've said before,
 I'll hold you an hundred *Spanish* Dollars,
 That there's few better *Latin* Scholars.
 But here's another, — What d'ye call him?
S—rs, and be *Cbrees* I'll maul him;
 Nay, with the *Dg'el* I'll make a League
 To plague this counterseiting *Teague*;
St. Patrick curse such lousy Gentry,
 That are after to deny their Country:

In A

The

The De'el e'en burn him with a Firebrand,
 He was born in *England*, not in *Ireland*;
 Be *Obreeft* he makes me swear and curse;
 But I shou'd like no Man the worse
 Was he to tell me what is true,
 Tho' he was born a *Turk* or *Jew*;
 But if what he says is all a Fiction,
 And he's made up of Contradiction,
 Then may St. *Patrick* fetch me hence,
 If I don't expose his Impudence;
 And think it strange when this is known,
 He should impose upon the Town;
 Be me Soul-vashon, it is Pity,
 He should play *Teague* in the Committee;
 He thought to make the Audience wonder,
 When he was playing *Captain Blunder*,
 Be *Obreeft* he made worse Noise than Thunder.
 For Arrah Joy, upon my Soul,
 He could do nothing else but howl!
 But now I leave my *Irish Brogue*,
 For here comes *Snapper's* spotted Dog,
 No Greyhound, Spaniel, Pointer, Setter,
 Nor Turnspit Breed, but something better.
 In short, I'll tell him to his Face,
 He's nothing but a Dog in Case,
 Indeed he does that Part so clever,
 He ought to be a Dog for ever.
 I'd have him imitate young *H-p-r*,
 And stir himself a little shanper.
 But he that has a foolish Pate,
 Is always wise in's own Conceit,

And

And certainly will never mend,
 Or take Advice from any Friend:
 Therefore I'll give myself no Pain
 About him, for my Labour's vain.
 There's two new Actors, *W--ts* and *G--ts*,
 With heavy Heels and empty Pates,
 And so I leave them to the Fates.
 My Head it is not worth the troubling
 About *F--ts*——ce come from *Dublin*.
 Well, now I've done with all the Men,
 And to the Women come again.

Hear me, ye Verse-inspiring Lasses,
 That dwell o' th' Top o' Mount *Parnassus*:
 Let *Melpomene*, delightful Maid,
 With softest Strains my Fancy aid,
 And set each Actress to my View,
 That I their two Extreame may shew,
 And Merit give where Merit's due.
 The first that comes is gay Sir *Harry*,
 Who without th' graceful Mien of *Barry*,
 Has Charms sufficient still to please,
 She does it with such seeming Ease;
 Indeed she's as not so good a Leg
 As celebrated *Irish Peg*:
 She plays fond *Juliet* excellently,
 In *Athenais* she'll content ye;
 With graceful Person, Voice most clear,
 She'll please the Eye, and charm the Ear.
 Yet for two Faults I do accuse her,
 The first she'll study nought that's new, Sir,
 The

The next in mournful *Belvedere*,
 She's scarce the Power to draw a Tear;
 In short she acts in that so shocking,
 You'd think that she the Part was mocking.
 Enough of her, now change the Scene,
 For here comes Mrs. *M——n*;
 Whose Looks the most obdurate Heart
 Wou'd prepossess to take her Part;
 With tuneful Voice she sings so well,
 You'd think you heard sweet *Philomel*,
 Who with a Thorn against her Breast,
 Sings all the warbling Choir to rest;
 Had she but all Things equivalent,
 Was she possess'd o' th' speaking Talent;
 A second *Cibber* she'd appear,
 And reign without a Rival here:
 But thro' the World who e'er could find
 All Perfections in human Kind?
 Egad you'll think all this surprizing,
 That I should turn to moralizing,
 And count me simple for my Pains,
 To leave my *Hudibrastic* Strains;
 But who's without his Imperfections,
 Or who can write without Reflections?
 For when a Thought enters the Brain,
 It fills the Poet's Head with Pain,
 Until he's brought it out again.
 But now, to leave all further Prating,
 I'll tell you who's th' next in waiting,
 'Tis *Columbine*, a pretty Girl,
 Mind but her Bubbies how they swell,

And

And pant and heave for that same Blessing,
 That amorous Swains call gentle Pressing,
 Whilst they her Beauties are possessing. }
 I do not mean the wanton *Punka*,
 But such a Nymph as *Hunkamunka*;
 For that's the Part I like her best in,
 And so I'll introduce the rest in.

Silence you quaking Geese and Ganders,
 Here comes the Spouse of Teague S—rs,
 With jaunting Mien, affected Air,
 I knew her at *West-Smithfield* Fair
 Play tragick Farce, or rough or smooth,
 At little P—p's wooden Booth.
 And she's the worst in all the Nation,
 She's so puff'd up with Affectation;
 She speaks nor well in Verse or Prose,
 But drowns her Language in her Nose:
 In short she is not worth my Notice,
 And he that thinks so a dull Sot is.
 The next in Character shall follow,
 And hark I hear a dreadful Hollow, }
 Oh! 'tis the ranting *Dolabolla*;
 Who in that bombast Fustian Farce,
 Does kick Lord *Grizzle* on the A—e;
 There she can raise her Voice and swagger,
 And stab poor *Noodle* with her Dagger:
 But when she's stabb'd herself the next,
 There ends her Acting and my Text.
 Here's Mrs. W—e, she's the Prompter,
 And I'll say nothing to affront her,

C

But

But only tell her she did *Damon*
 Better than *M——ce* did *Palæmon*.
 Is there no more ?— O yes, Gad's Curse,
 There's Mrs. *M——n*, *Juliet's* Nurse ;
 That Part's the best that she can play,
 And Mrs. *Slamerkin*, they say,
 But she is old and past her Day.
 There is another on my Life,
 'Tis Signior *Harlequino's* Wife ;
 Can she act too ?— Not worth a Louse,
 She only serves to fill the House.

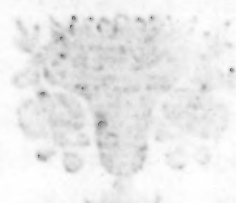
But here's a pretty Girl from *France*,
 And she can— yes, Sir, she can dance,
 And she can— something else by Chance.
 I think my Eyes are very dim,
 Or else I think I see Miss *Pl——m*,
 And she's a little Cherubim.
 Let older Actors blush for Shame,
 That she can rival them in Fame ;
 What she will be I do not know,
 'Tis only Time alone can show.
 Now to the last of all I come,
 And what's his Name, 'tis honest *T——m* ;
 And by th' Honour of a Candle-Snuffer,
 Your *B——b* knows he's a special Buffer.
 Thus, Sir, I've made my Promise good,
 As every honest Mortal shou'd ;
 Tho' Cruft of Pye serves for a Token
 That Promises are often broken ;

Yet

Yet he whose Heart's honest and true,
 Of such, alas ! there's but too few,
 Would keep as steady to his Word
 To a Beggar's soon as to a Lord,
 I think that Man worthy of Trust is,
 Who does to every Mortal Justice ;
 And he that has a Favour done him,
 And Obligations thrown upon him,
 I should detest him as most hateful,
 If ever he should prove ungrateful :
 Ingratitude, Sir, in my Mind,
 Is really Treason to Mankind :
 He that's the Will, but Power needs,
 His Will should serve instead of Deeds.
 Thus, when I wrote these comic Lays,
 I did it not for Gain or Praise ;
 If it has Power to gain me Friends,
 'Tis all I want, I have my Ends.



Yet the whole of my heart and soul
Of such a kind, that I can never
Would have been so much in the world
To a better life as to a land
I think that I have seen of this
Who does not know what I mean
And he that has a better heart than
And Obedience to God and man
I should desire him as most honest
If ever he should know my mind
Ingratitude, but to my mind
Is really I never so happy
He that has the will, but power
He will think of me as of a land
I am, when I am in the world
I am in the world of the world
He has power to give me life
To all I want, I have my heart



P O E M
ON
FRIENDSHIP.

OF all the Joys by which our Lives are
blest,
A Friend sincere, and true, is sure the
best.
When dismal Thoughts—when anxious Care
and Strife,
Too cru'ly black each Retrospect of Life :
When thus oppress'd with Torments, Sighs,
and Tears,
We utter our Complaints, and no one hears ;
A Friend, at such a Time, would give Relief
For he that shares our Woes, can ease our Grief.
That Friendship is a God-like Attribute,
The conscientious Man will ne'er dispute.
'Tis none but such as are professed Fools
Will deviate from Friendship's sacred Rules ;
They're

They're ignorant of the Blessing that attends
 The sweet Society of faithful Friends ;
 Nor know the Joys which Souls united gain,
 Like Foes to Happiness, and Friends to Pain :
 Too miserable State of human Kind,
 No Good done here, no Good can be behind.

Suppose me cast upon some barren Clime,
 Where my Misfortunes must increase with
 Time :

Think it a Place that Mankind never knew,
 Where nought but Rocks, and horrid Wild's in
 view,

Nor Tree, nor Shrub, to chear the barren
 Ground,

But ruffling, cold, bleak Winds, roar all a-
 round ;

Where deadly Famine, with its meagre Face,
 Adds greater Horrors to the dismal Place ;

Yet—there, had I a Friend to bless my Sight,
 I'd look upon those Horrors with Delight,
 And think it Day ev'n in the darkest Night. }

Imagine I'm thrown to a loathsome Jail,
 Where Darkness reigns and Sorrow doth prevail,
 Where nought is heard but Sighs and dismal
 Groans,

Deny'd my Food, my Lodging on the Stones ;
 Cast there by cruel and relentless Foes,
 Whose Tyranny still aggravates my Woes ;

Yet

Yet there a Friend would baffle all their Malice,
And change my loathed Prison to a Palace.

Or—should I love, and by the powerful Eyes
Of some bright Beauty spend my Life in Sighs,
Whose Frowns make black Despair possess my
Heart,

And green-ey'd Jealousy increase my Smart :
When thus with Love, and all it Cares oppress'd,
Had I a Friend, I'd clasp him to my Breast ;
Bless the kind Heavens for the welcome Guest,
That eas'd my Cares, and gave my Sorrow Rest.

There's not a Grief that can our Hearts possess,
But Friendship can dispel, or make it less.
Now let us change this melancholy Theme,
And turn to Pleasure's visionary Dreams ;
When Plenty smiles, and Joy doth seem to
reign,
And *Comus*' Revels opes the gaudy Scene.

Say—I'd a great Estate unrep'd by Toil,
In a warm Climate, and a grateful Soil :
Say—I'd a Strength entire, a Body whole,
A prudent Mind, and a quiet Soul, }
No rugged Cares my Pleasures to controul : }
But all around me shews a happy Life,
Unmix'd with Troubles and secure from Strife;
Living in some Corner of this happy Isle,
Where sweet perfuming Flowers ever smile :
Where

Where I a lordly Libertine may rove,
 And pluck the Flowers and eat the Fruit I love:
 Where warbling Choristers on every Spray,
 With their shrill Musick, chear me all the
 Day:

Where everlasting Spring around remains,
 And constant Verdure crowns the joyful Plains.
 Think it a Pattern of th' *Elysian* Fields,
 That all which needy Life can crave does yield;
 In such a Station you'd be apt to say
 I must be happy, but I answer, nay:
 Unless that I a faithful Friend could boast,
 My Riches vanish, and my Pleasure's lost.
 Were I the Monarch of a splendid Throne,
 That by Success in Arms had gain'd Renown,
 By which I kept my neighbouring Roes in Fear,
 With Justice reigning,—yet not too severe;
 Yet still Misfortunes would my Life attend,
 Unless each Subject was a faithful Friend.
 Thus in each State of Life I strive to shew,
 What Happiness from faithful Friends accrue;
 Nor Plenty, Riches, nor the State of Kings,
 Like a true Friend, such Satisfaction brings:
 Thus he that would be happy vainly strives,
 Without that Good that sweetens all our Lives.

BATH, April 21,

1753.

J. M. L.